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25 October 1982

NOTE FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

VIA: Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

FROM:

Director, Intelligence Community Staff

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SUBJECT: Backup Reconnaissance Systems

1. The proposal by Mr. Lindsay quite correctly points out a problem that the Intelligence Community has been addressing for some time. He proposes that we develop low cost imagery systems (primarily of a film return type) to be launched on short notice to replace our primary systems should they malfunction on-orbit or be disabled as a result of low-level Soviet action. This approach has not been adopted for the following reasons:

- The post-1985 imagery mix will have a high degree of robustness to the failure of any one imaging satellite. Thus, the need to provide lower capability backup systems has not been considered to be urgent.
- The Community requirements studies that have been performed have failed to identify significant reductions in imagery requirements during these crisis periods. Thus, systems approaching our peacetime capability have been emphasized -- particularly those with near-real-time capabilities.
- Mr. Lindsay's approach emphasizes lower-level Soviet threats that might be expected during a crisis period. Survivability enhancement options that have been proposed by the NRO are capable of addressing these lower-level threats at a relatively moderate additional cost.

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2. We are currently participating in a joint Reconnaissance Systems Review with the Department of Defense. This review is focused on investment alternatives that might provide intelligence support under the full spectrum of conflict including general war and recovery. Reconstitutable systems are being addressed as part of this review. When the review is completed (approximately 10 November), I would anticipate that there will be agreement on some additional relatively low-cost survivability enhancement options and some recommendations for further studies of advanced concepts for survivability in higher-level conflicts. Some of these concepts are reconstitutable systems and proposals such as these from Mr. Lindsay should be readdressed in-depth at that time. When these studies are complete, I believe we will be in a better position to provide you with a comprehensive consideration of the pros and cons of moving in this direction.

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Rear Admiral, USN

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